

Message Text

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11

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00

LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 /050 W

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R 271943Z FEB 76

FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 626

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 1747

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EEC, GR

SUBJECT: GREEK COORDINATION MINISTER MEETS EC COMMISSIONERS

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 1716, (B) ATHENS 1793

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: GREEK MINISTER FOR ECONOMIC COORDINATION AND PLANNING, PAPALIGOURAS, HELD A MEETING WITH EIGHT OUT OF THE THIRTEEN EC COMMISSIONERS ON FEBRUARY 26. THE MEETING HAS BEEN DESCRIBED TO US AS PRELIMINARY AND THE COMMISSION HAS MADE NO DECISIONS ON HOW IT WILL PROCEED WITH THE NEGOTIATIONS. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH THE COMMISSION, PAPALIGOURAS NOTED THAT IN THE CASE OF THE PREVIOUS ENLARGMENT OF THE COMMUNITY IT TOOK THE EC ABOUT 6 MONTHS TO PREPARE A NEGOTIATING POSITION AND HE BELIEVED THIS TIME FRAME COULD BE SHORTENED IN THE GREEK CASE. OUR COMMISSION SOURCES SAY IT IS TOO EARLY TO TALK ABOUT A CONCRETE SCHEDULE BUT CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS WITH GREECE WILL BEGIN IN THE FALL. END SUMMARY.

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2. PAPALIGOURAS WAS RECEIVED BY A STAR-STUDED DELEGATION AT THE EC COMMISSION, INCLUDING COMMISSION PRESIDENT ORTOLI, AND COMMISSIONERS SOAMES, HILLERY, SPINELLI, BORSCHETTE, LARDINOIS, BRUNER AND SCARASCIA MUGNOZZA. OUR COMMISSION SOURCES BELIEVE THAT A PRIMARY PURPOSE OF PAPALIGOURAS' VISIT WAS A GOOD WILL MISSION TO ASSURE THE COMMISSION THAT THE GREEKS HAD CONFIDENCE IN IT DESPITE THEIR CRITICISM OF THE COMMISSION'S INITIAL OPINION ON GREEK MEMBERSHIP. THESE SOURCES SAY THAT ONE OF THE REASONS PAPALIGOURAS WAS SO WELL RECEIVED BY THE COMMISSIONERS WAS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THERE WAS GOOD WILL ON THE COMMISSION SIDE ALSO.

3. WE UNDERSTAND THAT AT THE MEETING PAPALIGOURAS INFORMED THE COMMISSIONERS THAT GREECE WOULD NOT REQUEST ANY SPECIAL TREATMENT FROM THE EC AND WOULD NOT REQUIRE ANY SPECIAL ADJUSTMENTS OF COMMUNITY REGULATIONS. GREECE ANTICIPATES THAT A FIVE YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD WILL BE SUFFICIENT FOLLOWING WHICH IT WILL APPLY ALL EC RULES.

4. IN THE PERIOD PRIOR TO GREEK ACCESSION IT HAS BEEN AGREED THAT IN ORDER TO PREPARE GREECE FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP THE GREEK-EC ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEEPEMED. SPECIFICALLY BOTH SIDES AGREED TO SPEED UP THE PROCESS OF AGRICULTURAL HARMONIZATION AND A MEETING OF EXPERTS HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR THE SECOND HALF OF MARCH. THERE WILL ALSO BE INFORMAL EXCHANGES BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND GREEK ECONOMIC OFFICIALS TO PAVE THE WAY FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

5. ACCORDING TO COMMISSION SOURCES THE MODALITIES OF THE NEGOTIATION HAVE NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED. THEY NOTE THAT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE LAST THREE MEMBERS CONDUCTED UNDER ARTICLE 237, NO PRECISE NEGOTIATING MANDATE WAS EVER ESTABLISHED. THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS COREPER REGULARLY EXAMINED AND FORWARDED TO THE COUNCIL SHORT PAPERS ORIGINATING IN THE COMMISSION DEFINING PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD GUIDE THE NEGOTIATIONS. THE PRACTICE FOLLOWED IN MORE RECENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSOCIATION NEGOTIATIONS UNDER ARTICLE 238, HOWEVER HAVE INVOLVED THE COMMISSION PRESENTING FOR COUNCIL APPROVAL A FAIRLY DETAILED NEGOTIATING MANDATE PRIOR TO THE OPENING OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. OUR SOURCES ARE AS YET UNCLEAR HOW THE COMMUNITY WILL HANDLE THE GREEK CASE, BUT THEY BELIEVE THE COUNCIL WILL TAKE A DECISION ON THIS POINT PRIOR TO APRIL 6-7 WHEN THE NEXT EC-GREEK ASSOCIATION COUNCIL IS SCHEDULED. HINTON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RELATIONS WITH REGIONAL ORGS, MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS, ECONOMIC PROGRAMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976ECBRU02041
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760076-0279
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976026/aaaaaepy.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 EC BRUSSELS 1716, 76 ATHENS 1793
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 31 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <31 MAR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <07 JUL 2004 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GREEK COORDINATION MINISTER MEETS EC COMMISSIONERS
TAGS: PFOR, GR, EEC, (PAPALIGOURAS, PANAGIOTIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006